

As bombs, shells and rockets continue to fly in Gaza Strip, Newport-Mesa's congressmen are coming out in support of Israel, saying the country has a right to defend itself.

"If the United States were attacked by one of its neighbors, or any other foreign power for that matter, we would respond accordingly, citing our national self interest and the right to defend our citizens and sovereignty," Rep. John Campbell said in a statement released to the media. "Israel is conducting its actions much the same as the United States would."

Campbell called the violence regrettable, but said Israel's strikes on Gaza since Dec. 27 were a clear act of self-defense against Islamist group Hamas.

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher similarly laid blame squarely on Hamas, calling the violence awful but saying it had no interest in peace.

"The hate-filled radicals who launched missiles into Israel- Hamas triggermen, not Israeli pilots- are the ones who are really responsible for the horrible mayhem we are witnessing in Gaza," Rohrabacher said in a statement. "The radical Islamists ruthlessly and without any remorse did what they knew would bring retaliation and result in the slaughter of their own people."